

CLAIMS

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method for providing speech control to a graphical user interface (GUI) containing objects to be selected, the method comprising:
 - dividing the GUI into a plurality of screen areas;
 - assigning priorities to the screen areas;
 - receiving a first audio input relating to the selection of one of the objects in the GUI;
 - determining the one of the screen areas that has the highest priority and includes a first object matching the first audio input; and
 - selecting the first object, if the determined screen area only contains one object matching the first audio input.
2. The method of claim 1, further comprising:
 - using a second input to select one of the objects that matches the first audio input in the determined screen area, if the determined screen area contains more than one object that matches the first audio input.
3. The method of claim 2, wherein using a second input includes:
 - marking each object matching the first audio input;
 - receiving a second audio input relating to the selection of one of the marked objects; and
 - selecting the marked object that best matches the second audio input.

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- P U R E P R I M A C Y
4. The method of claim 3, further comprising removing the markers.
 5. The method of claim 3, wherein marking the objects includes marking the objects with icons.
 6. The method of claim 5, wherein marking the objects with the icons includes marking the objects with semi-transparent icons.
 7. The method of claim 6, wherein marking the objects with semi-transparent icons includes marking the objects with semi-transparent icons that overlap the objects.
 8. The method of claim 7, wherein marking the objects with semi-transparent icons that overlap the objects includes marking the objects with semi-transparent icons that have numbered labels.
 9. The method of claim 1, wherein assigning priorities to the screen areas includes assigning priorities to the screen areas based on usage.
 10. The method of claim 1, wherein assigning priorities to the screen areas includes assigning adjustable priorities to the screen areas.

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11. The method of claim 1, further comprising indicating the one of the screen areas having the highest priority.
 12. The method of claim 11, wherein indicating the highest priority screen area includes indicating the highest priority screen area with a visual output.
 13. The method of claim 12, wherein indicating the highest priority screen area with visual output includes indicating the highest priority screen area with a visual output that includes highlighting.
 14. The method of claim 1, further comprising confirming the receipt of the first audio input.
 15. The method of claim 14, wherein confirming the receipt of the first audio input includes confirming the receipt of the first audio input with an audio output.

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16. A method for using a graphical user interface (GUI), the method comprising:
- receiving a first audio input relating to the selection of one of the objects in the GUI;
 - determining the one of the screen areas that has the highest priority and includes a first object matching the first audio input;
 - selecting the first object, if the determined screen area only contains one object matching the first audio input; and
 - using a second input to select one of the objects that matches the first audio input in the determined screen area, if the determined screen area contains more than one object that matches the first audio input.

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17. An apparatus for providing speech control to a graphical user interface (GUI) containing objects to be selected, the apparatus comprising:
 - at least one memory having program instructions; and
 - at least one processor configured to use the program instructions to perform the operations of:
 - dividing the GUI into a plurality of screen areas;
 - assigning priorities to the screen areas;
 - receiving a first audio input relating to the selection of one of the objects in the GUI;
 - determining the one of the screen areas that has the highest priority and includes a first object matching the first audio input; and
 - selecting the first object, if the determined screen area only contains one object matching the first audio input.
 18. The apparatus of claim 17, wherein the operations further comprise:
 - using a second input to select one of the objects that matches the first audio input in the determined screen area, if the determined screen area contains more than one object that matches the first audio input.

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19. The apparatus of claim 18, wherein using a second input includes:
 - marking each object matching the first audio input;
 - receiving a second audio input relating to the selection of one of the marked objects; and
 - selecting the marked object that best matches the second audio input.
 20. The apparatus of claim 19, wherein the operations further comprise removing the markers.
 21. The apparatus of claim 19, wherein marking the objects includes marking the objects with icons.
 22. The apparatus of claim 21, wherein marking the objects with the icons includes marking the objects with semi-transparent icons.
 23. The apparatus of claim 22, wherein marking the objects with semi-transparent icons includes marking the objects with semi-transparent icons that overlap the objects.
 24. The apparatus of claim 23, wherein marking the objects with semi-transparent icons that overlap the objects includes marking the objects with semi-transparent icons that have numbered labels.

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25. The apparatus of claim 17, wherein assigning priorities to the screen areas includes assigning priorities to the screen areas based on usage.
 26. The apparatus of claim 17, wherein assigning priorities to the screen areas includes assigning adjustable priorities to the screen areas.
 27. The apparatus of claim 17, wherein the operations further comprise indicating the one of the screen areas having the highest priority.
 28. The apparatus of claim 27, wherein indicating the highest priority screen area includes indicating the highest priority screen area with a visual output.
 29. The apparatus of claim 28, wherein indicating the highest priority screen area with visual output includes indicating the highest priority screen area with a visual output that includes highlighting.
 30. The apparatus of claim 17, wherein the operations further comprise confirming the receipt of the first audio input.
 31. The apparatus of claim 30, wherein confirming the receipt of the first audio input includes confirming the receipt of the first audio input with an audio output.

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32. An apparatus for providing speech control to a graphical user interface (GUI) containing objects to be selected, the apparatus comprising:
- at least one memory having program instructions; and
 - at least one processor configured to use the program instructions to perform the operations of:
 - receiving a first audio input relating to the selection of one of the objects in the GUI;
 - determining the one of the screen areas that has the highest priority and includes a first object matching the first audio input;
 - selecting the first object, if the determined screen area only contains one object matching the first audio input; and
 - using a second input to select one of the objects that matches the first audio input in the determined screen area, if the determined screen area contains more than one object that matches the first audio input.

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- TODAY'S DATE: 08/07/2000
33. A system for providing speech control to a graphical user interface (GUI) containing objects to be selected, comprising:
- means for dividing the GUI into a plurality of screen areas;
- means for assigning priorities to the screen areas;
- means for receiving a first audio input relating to the selection of one of the objects in the GUI;
- means for determining the one of the screen areas that has the highest priority and includes a first object matching the first audio input;
- and
- means for selecting the first object, if the determined screen area only contains one object matching the first audio input.
34. The system of claim 33, further comprising:
- means for using a second input to select one of the objects that matches the first audio input in the determined screen area, if the determined screen area contains more than one object that matches the first audio input.

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35. The system of claim 34, wherein the means for using a second input includes:
means for marking each object matching the first audio input;
means for receiving a second audio input relating to the selection of
one of the marked objects; and
means for selecting the marked object that best matches the second
audio input.
 36. The system of claim 35, further comprising means for removing the markers.
 37. The system of claim 35, wherein the markers include icons.
 38. The system of claim 37, wherein the icons are semi-transparent.
 39. The system of claim 38, wherein the icons overlap the objects matching the
audio input.
 40. The system of claim 39, wherein the icons includes numbered labels.
 41. The system of claim 33, wherein the priorities of the screen areas are based
on usage.
 42. The system of claim 33, wherein the priorities of the screen areas are
adjustable.

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43. The system of claim 33, further comprising means for indicating the one of the screen areas having the highest priority.
 44. The system of claim 43, wherein the means for indicating the highest priority screen area includes means for indicating the highest priority screen area with a visual output.
 45. The system of claim 44, wherein the means for indicating the highest priority screen area includes means for indicating the highest priority screen area with a visual output that includes highlighting.
 46. The system of claim 33, further comprising means for confirming the receipt of the first audio input.
 47. The system of claim 46, wherein the means for confirming the receipt of the first audio input includes means for generating an audio output.

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48. A system for providing speech control to a graphical user interface (GUI) containing objects to be selected, comprising:
- means for receiving a first audio input relating to the selection of one of the objects in the GUI;
- means for determining the one of the screen areas that has the highest priority and includes a first object matching the first audio input;
- means for selecting the first object, if the determined screen area only contains one object matching the first audio input; and
- means for using a second input to select one of the objects that matches the first audio input in the determined screen area, if the determined screen area contains more than one object that matches the first audio input.

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49. A computer readable medium containing instructions for controlling a computer system to perform a method for providing speech control to a graphical user interface (GUI) containing objects to be selected, the method comprising:
 - dividing the GUI into a plurality of screen areas;
 - assigning priorities to the screen areas;
 - receiving a first audio input relating to the selection of one of the objects in the GUI;
 - determining the one of the screen areas that has the highest priority and includes a first object matching the first audio input; and
 - selecting the first object, if the determined screen area only contains one object matching the first audio input.
 50. The computer readable medium of claim 49, wherein the method further comprises:
 - using a second input to select one of the objects that matches the first audio input in the determined screen area, if the determined screen area contains more than one object that matches the first audio input.

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51. The computer readable medium of claim 50, wherein using a second input includes:
 - marking each object matching the first audio input;
 - receiving a second audio input relating to the selection of one of the marked objects; and
 - selecting the marked object that best matches the second audio input.
 52. The computer readable medium of claim 51, wherein the method further comprises removing the markers.
 53. The computer readable medium of claim 51, wherein marking the objects includes marking the objects with icons.
 54. The computer readable medium of claim 53, wherein marking the objects with the icons includes marking the objects with semi-transparent icons.
 55. The computer readable medium of claim 54, wherein marking the objects with semi-transparent icons includes marking the objects with semi-transparent icons that overlap the objects.
 56. The computer readable medium of claim 55, wherein marking the objects with semi-transparent icons that overlap the objects includes marking the objects with semi-transparent icons that have numbered labels.

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57. The computer readable medium of claim 49, wherein assigning priorities to the screen areas includes assigning priorities to the screen areas based on usage.
 58. The computer readable medium of claim 49, wherein assigning priorities to the screen areas includes assigning adjustable priorities to the screen areas.
 59. The computer readable medium of claim 49, wherein the method further comprises indicating the one of the screen areas having the highest priority.
 60. The computer readable medium of claim 59, wherein indicating the highest priority screen area includes indicating the highest priority screen area with a visual output.
 61. The computer readable medium of claim 60, wherein indicating the highest priority screen area with visual output includes indicating the highest priority screen area with a visual output that includes highlighting.
 62. The computer readable medium of claim 49, wherein the method further comprises confirming the receipt of the first audio input.

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63. The computer readable medium of claim 62, wherein confirming the receipt of the first audio input includes confirming the receipt of the first audio input with an audio output.
64. A computer readable medium containing instructions for controlling a computer system to perform a method for providing speech control to a graphical user interface (GUI) containing objects to be selected, the method comprising:
- receiving a first audio input relating to the selection of one of the objects in the GUI;
- determining the one of the screen areas having the highest priority and including a first object matching the first audio input;
- selecting the first object, if the determined screen area only contains one object matching the first audio input; and
- using a second input to select one of the objects that matches the first audio input in the determined screen area, if the determined screen area contains more than one object that matches the first audio input.

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65. An apparatus for providing speech control to a graphical user interface (GUI) containing objects to be selected, the apparatus comprising:
 - means for dividing the GUI into a plurality of screen areas;
 - means for assigning priorities to the screen areas;
 - means for receiving a first audio input relating to the selection of one of the objects in the GUI;
 - means for determining the one of the screen areas that has the highest priority and includes a first object matching the first audio input;
 - and
 - means for selecting the first object, if the determined screen area only contains one object matching the first audio input.
 66. The apparatus of claim 65, further comprising:
 - means for using a second input to select one of the objects that matches the first audio input in the determined screen area, if the determined screen area contains more than one object that matches the first audio input.

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67. The apparatus of claim 66, wherein the means for using a second input includes:
- means for marking each object matching the first audio input;
- means for receiving a second audio input relating to the selection of one of the marked objects; and
- means for selecting the marked object that best matches the second audio input.
68. The apparatus of claim 67, further comprising means for removing the markers.
69. The apparatus of claim 67, wherein the markers include icons.
70. The apparatus of claim 69, wherein the icons are semi-transparent.
71. The apparatus of claim 70, wherein the icons overlap the objects matching the audio input.
72. The apparatus of claim 71, wherein the icons include numbered labels.
73. The apparatus of claim 65, wherein the priorities of the screen areas are based on usage.

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74. The apparatus of claim 65, wherein the priorities of the screen areas are adjustable.
 75. The apparatus of claim 65, further comprising means for indicating the one of the screen areas having the highest priority.
 76. The apparatus of claim 75, wherein the means for indicating the highest priority screen area includes means for indicating the highest priority screen area with a visual output.
 77. The apparatus of claim 76, wherein the means for indicating the highest priority screen area with visual output includes means for indicating the highest priority screen area with a visual output that includes highlighting.
 78. The apparatus of claim 65, further comprising means for confirming the receipt of the first audio input.
 79. The apparatus of claim 78, wherein confirming the receipt of the first audio input includes audio output.

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80. An apparatus for providing speech control to a graphical user interface (GUI) containing objects to be selected, the apparatus comprising:
- means for receiving a first audio input relating to the selection of one of the objects in the GUI;
- means for determining the one of the screen areas that has the highest priority and includes a first object matching the first audio input;
- means for selecting the first object, if the determined screen area only contains one object matching the first audio input; and
- means for using a second input to select one of the objects that matches the first audio input in the determined screen area, if the determined screen area contains more than one object that matches the first audio input.

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